



# The HHSA Connection

## SPECIAL EDITION

DECEMBER 2003

SAFE, HEALTHY AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

### AGENCY NEWS BRIEF



Jean Shepard,  
HHSA Acting Director

## A Word From Our Acting Director

### *A Familiar Face in a New Role*

While 2003 certainly held challenges for people around the County, I look back with pride at all the good work the Agency has done, and look forward with confidence. First of all, I admire the work each and every one of you does. Everyone contributes in a special way, and it's that teamwork that makes us able to provide such valuable services to our neighbors in San Diego County. I know I speak for thousands when I give my thanks for all the efforts made during the firestorm that truly demonstrate your commitment and dedication to service.

In my current position, as Acting Director for the Agency, I have an opportunity to expand my efforts of leading the Agency to excellence by focusing on several key areas. In addition to smooth operations overall, I plan to spearhead efforts that tackle issues such as the state budget, improved communication with our advisory boards and stakeholders, food stamp error rate, and continuing the integration of services.

I know I can count on you, the Agency team, as we forge ahead into 2004. With warm regards, I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful holiday season. ❖

### PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE: PUBLIC HEALTH

## OPERATION SAFEGUARD CALLS THE SHOTS

*Emergency preparedness exercise attracts more than 400*

More than 400 people, including County employees, rolled up their sleeves on Nov. 18 to participate in Operation Safeguard San Diego, a drill designed to test the County's ability to vaccinate large numbers of people quickly.

A free flu shot was the incentive for volunteers, who lined up at the Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in San Diego.

"If we had to vaccinate thousands of people for an outbreak of an infectious disease like SARS or smallpox, Operation Safeguard illustrates how we would go about doing it," said **Steve Wood**, chief of Emergency Medical Services and Disaster Preparedness, and the director of Operation Safeguard. "Drills like these are the best way for us to see our strengths and weaknesses and address them before disaster strikes." The event was filmed by the California Distance Learning Network, and will be shown to health departments across the country. ❖






Eileen Marlow, PHN, East Region, vaccinates a volunteer.

### PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE: PUBLIC HEALTH

## 'TIS THE SEASON TO DRIVE SAFELY

*Celebrate National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month*

Amidst all the festivities of the season, be sure to follow smart road rules. On average, an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash kills someone every 30 minutes. The extra bustle of parties, visiting, and shopping adds to stressful driving conditions. Top it off with drinks or other impairing substances, and the road gets more dangerous than ever. Keep your holidays merry:

-  Designate a driver or call a cab
-  Drive defensively
-  Stay over if you are not comfortable driving

## New Format Coming

In the new year, the HHSA Connection will take on a new look. Send your suggestions or submissions to: [jennifer.mallory@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:jennifer.mallory@sdcounty.ca.gov)

## Did You Know...?

You can check your County e-mail, calendar and contacts off-site at <https://webmail.sdcounty.ca.gov>. Remember to be sensitive to proprietary information.



County of San Diego  
*Welcomes You!*

San Diego County  
**WILDFIRE**  
**RAMONA**  
**LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**  
**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

**FOOD ASSISTANCE**  
Health & Human Services Agency

Aging & Independent  
Services

COUNTY OF  
SAN DIEGO

County of San Diego  
**LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**BULLETIN BOARD**

HHS  
Crisis Counseling  
Aging & Independent  
Services

**HHS**  
**Crisis Counseling**

*Thank You!*

## Dealing With Disaster

### Agency Employees Step Up

The magnitude of the recent fires demanded major team-work and dedication, with people working together to provide many types of services and expertise.

Agency departments heavily involved in the fire recovery efforts include Mental Health, AIS, Childcare, Media, and Eligibility Technicians.

### Hard Numbers, and Hard Work

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ★Estimated Structural Damage:\$510,000,000      | ★Emergency Food Stamps Distributed: |
| ★Crisis Counseling Cases: 2,547                 | - 1,059 Households                  |
| ★Children Watched by LAC Childcare Workers: 628 | - 3,117 People                      |
|   | - \$344 Average Benefit Amount      |

San Diego County  
**WILDFIRE**  
**ALPINE**  
**LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**  
**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**





# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

## Some Secrets Need to be Shared

### County Compliance Office wants to hear your concerns

As public employees, we have a moral obligation to do the right thing. Besides a guilty conscience, infractions risk the County great expense in fines should a federal inspection uncover unethical or illegal conduct or billing fraud.

In efforts to ensure the Agency complies with federal and state funding requirements, the County established a Compliance office last fiscal year. **Bob Borntrager**, Compliance Officer, has been busy setting up procedures, training, and establishing a confidential, toll-free phone



line for reporting suspect behavior or situations: **(866) 549-0004**. Policies (posted on the Agency's Intranet site [http://hhsa\\_intranet.co.san-diego.ca.us/policy/index.html](http://hhsa_intranet.co.san-diego.ca.us/policy/index.html)) cover topics ranging from privacy issues to audit guidelines to reporting concerns.

Quality First mandates that all employees receive compliance training. Look for upcoming class listings, or managers can call to set up a training session for their group. ❖

"An ethical workplace is your right... and your responsibility."

# CLASSY CLASSIFICATIONS: CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER II

## Getting Tough on Tobacco

### Compliance Kingpin looks out for our air

Visiting bars around

the County may sound recreational, but for **Willie Pugh**, Code Enforcement



Willie Pugh takes a bite out of smoking violations.

Officer II, it's all business. A County employee for 34 years, Pugh works for Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention/Tobacco Control to ensure compliance with smoking regulations in bars, office buildings and any public area, such as in condo and apartment buildings. He receives phone complaints (from anonymous employees or patrons), notifies businesses, and accompanies local law enforcement on pop-in site visits to bars.

Pugh's schedule includes 2 or 3 evenings a week. "I like interacting with people, especially when I get to help solve a smoking situation."

In his "spare" time, Pugh can be found winning bowling tournaments around the southwest. ❖

# AGENCY NEWS BRIEF

## Disability Benefits 101

### Yes, clients can work and keep health care

Is it worth taking a job if it means losing health care benefits? For the disabled community, questions like this complicate every financial decision. Plus, the myriad support programs available - and how they affect each other - can create a lot of confusion.

**Joan Zinser**, Deputy Director, is on a statewide Working Disabled Steering Committee.



Chairman Cox with trainers MacDonald and Fortuna.

Assisted by **Steve Gardner**, Analyst III, she facilitated six "Disability Benefits 101"

trainings in San Diego in October. The trainings, which received a proclamation from **Chairman Greg Cox**, introduced an entrepreneurial new federal program that

rolled out in November, the "Ticket to Work," which aims to increase awareness about keeping benefits while working, and provides people with disabilities an opportunity to become self sufficient.

Clients will receive tickets in the mail and take them to an Employment Network Center for help with their job hunt. The Center, in turn, gets milestone payments for outcomes. The real payoff is the long-term benefits to the worker, and the community.

The trainings were conducted by Bryon MacDonald, from the *World Institute on Disability*, and Daniel Fortuna, from *Options: A Benefits Training Foundation*, and made possible by funding from Alliance Healthcare ([www.preview.disabilitybenefits101.org](http://www.preview.disabilitybenefits101.org)).

# FROM THE "PAT-ON-THE-BACK" DEPT.

## Making Positive Strides

**Linda Wong Kerberg**, ADD of the Office of Violence Prevention, received the Andrea O'Donnel Award on October 13th, for her leadership in preventing Domestic Violence. **Mike Van Mouwerik**, previously the Agency's Budget Manager, has been promoted to Assistant Finance



Director, and **Susan Bower** has accepted the position as the new ADS Assistant Administrator. Give a cheer - one year later, **South Region's Walking Club** is still going strong! The Oxford Street building alone is home to 44 regular walkers who can earn prizes and increase their overall health.



County of San Diego

Health and Human Services Agency

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Pam Slater, District 3 Ron Roberts, District 4  
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Jean Shepard

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